

# County of Knox

# **Ergonomics Program**

(Formerly Video Display Terminal Program)



County Administrative Offices  
62 Union Street  
Rockland, Maine 04841

Approved by Commissioners November 8, 2005  
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# **Ergonomics Written Program**

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this program is to establish an ergonomics program for the County of Knox.

This program applies to all employees who are required to perform by repeating the same movement or by lifting, carrying, or pushing things.

## **Goal**

The goal of this program is to reduce work-related musculoskeletal disorders developed by workers when a major part of their jobs involve reaching, bending over, lifting heavy objects, using continuous force, working with vibrating equipment and doing repetitive motions.

## **Definitions**

***Cumulative Trauma Disorders (CTD):*** The wear and tear on tendons, muscles and sensitive nerve tissue caused by continuous use over an extended period of time.

***Ergonomics:*** The science that seeks to adapt work or working conditions to fit the worker.

***Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSDs):*** MSDs are injuries and illnesses that affect muscles, nerves, tendons, ligaments, joints or spinal discs.

## **Responsibilities**

Each department head shall serve as the *Program Administrator* in each county office. This person is responsible for:

- Issuing and administering this program.
- Providing training to employees on ergonomics.
- Compiling the training records of all employees included in the training sessions, and forwarding those records to the County Administrator for inclusion in each employee's training record (personnel file).
- Providing managers and supervisors with a Workstation Setup Evaluation Form to assess their employees' work areas for ergonomic hazards.

***The Maintenance Department is responsible for:***

- Making changes in workstations to support employee needs.
- Installing and adjusting furniture and/or workstations to support the company's ergonomics program.

***Managers and Supervisors are responsible for:***

- Encouraging employees to vary work tasks.
- Supporting and encouraging stretching at the workstation throughout the day.
- Evaluating workstations and making recommendations for changes.
- Recognizing ergonomic hazards within the department.
- Recognizing symptoms of CTD and MSD and initiating prompt medical attention.
- Encouraging early reporting of MSDs, their signs and symptoms, and MSD hazards.

***Employees are responsible for:***

- Adjusting their workstations to fit their work needs.
- Varying their work tasks throughout the day.
- Stretching at their workstations throughout the day.
- Reporting symptoms of CTD and MSDs to their supervisors.

**Program Activities**

***General***

- The County will provide equipment that supports good ergonomic design in the office.
- Employees will be involved in the work planning process to identify and find solutions for work process problems.
- Jobs, which contain repetitive motions, will be modified to reduce stress and strain on the body.
- Job rotation will be used to involve multiple muscle groups throughout the day.
- Time will be provided to employees to stretch at their workstations periodically throughout the day.
- Workstations should be evaluated by an outside agency every 3 years. Workstations will be evaluated annually (within one year for new hires), and low-cost changes will be made immediately. Changes which affect capital expenditures for office equipment will be evaluated and implemented as soon as is practical.
- Employees will be encouraged to vary their work tasks throughout the day.
- Employees with CTD will receive appropriate medical treatment.
- Employees with MSD will receive appropriate medical treatment.
- Injured employees returning to work will be given alternative tasks consistent with the health care provider's recommendations whenever possible.
- Initial ergonomics training will be provided each employee, supervisor, or department head as required, with follow-up training annually.

**Attachments**

***Record keeping***

- Workstation Setup Evaluation Form
- Non-Mandatory Appendix A to §1910.900: What You Need To Know About Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSDs)
- Non-Mandatory Appendix B to §1910.900: Summary of the OSHA Ergonomics Program Standard

# VIDEO DISPLAY TERMINAL WORKSTATION SURVEY

Municipal Member:			
Date:			
Completed By:			
Person and/or Location Surveyed:			
Number of Hours Per Day VDT is Used:			
<b>CRITERIA</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b><i>If No, how does the workstation differ from criteria and what controls if any are needed?</i></b>
<b><i>VDT UNIT</i></b>			
1. The top surface of the keyboard space bar (or bottom row of keys) is no higher than 2 1/2 inches above the work surface.			
2. The VDT unit is positioned to avoid glare on the screen.			
3. During keyboard use, the operator's upper arm and forearm are kept close to their side with elbows at a 90°-110° angle.			
4. During keyboard use, the operator's wrists are neutral or slightly extended.			
5. The top of the viewing screen is at or slightly below eye level.			
6. When the VDT unit is in use, the operator faces the monitor squarely and the operator, monitor and keyboard are in direct alignment			
7. The monitor screen is 18 to 30 inches from the operator's face, or at about arms reach.			
8. The screen swivels horizontally and it tilts or elevates vertically.			
9. The operator can control brightness and contrasts.			
10. The images on the screen are clean, sharp, and easy to read.			
11. If the operator has to read from a document, an adjustable document holder is located in the same plane as the monitor and keyboard.			
12. The keyboard is detachable.			
<b><i>CHAIR</i></b>			
13. The chair height is easily adjustable.			
14. The chair has an easily height and tilt adjustable backrest.			
15. The seat (pan) has an adjustable forward/backward glide.			
16. The backrest supports the inward curve of the operator's spine in the lumbar region.			
17. The seat is padded and has a waterfall front.			
18. You can easily place 2-3 fingers between the front edge of the seat and the back of the operator's calf.			
19. When comfortably seated, the operator's thighs are horizontal and lower legs are vertical.			
20. When comfortably seated, the operator's feet are flat on the floor or on a footrest.			
21. The chair is comfortable to the operator, and the operator is seated correctly in the chair.			

# VIDEO DISPLAY TERMINAL WORKSTATION SURVEY

<b>CRITERIA</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b><i>If No, how does the workstation differ from criteria and what controls if any are needed?</i></b>
<b><i>WORK SURFACE</i></b>			
22. The operator knows how to properly adjust the chair or it's adjustment has been reviewed with the operator.			
23. There is sufficient space under the desk for knees, feet and thighs.			
24. Mouse is parallel to and on the same level as keyboard.			
25. The edge of the work surface in front of the keyboard is rounded or padded.			
26. The keyboard rests on an adjustable height work surface.			
27. There is adequate working space.			
28. Items on the desk/work surface that are frequently used should be within arms' reach.			
29. A Phone headset is in use.			
<b><i>ENVIRONMENT</i></b>			
30. The lighting is not so bright as to cause discomfort or reflections.			
31. The lighting is not so dim as to cause the operator to strain to see.			
32. There is no light shining into the operator's eyes.			
33. Task lighting is available for operator use.			
34. The general environment is clean, with comfortable temperature and humidity and there is no excess noise.			
35. External windows have adjustable blinds or curtains to minimize glare.			
<b><i>TRAINING AND WORK PRACTICE</i></b>			
36. Adequate breaks away from the VDT are provided (minimum 15 minutes for every 2 hours of VDT use).			
37. Eye exam within last 2 years			
38. Minimum keystroke pressure is utilized by the operator.			
39. The operator has been trained in hazards associated with VDT use, how to avoid the hazards, proper use and adjustment of workstation components, and how to seek assistance with concerns.			

# VIDEO DISPLAY TERMINAL WORKSTATION SURVEY

<i>CRITERIA</i>	<i>YES</i>	<i>NO</i>	<i>If No, how does the workstation differ from criteria and what controls if any are needed?</i>
<i>COMMENTS</i>			
<i>RECOMMENDATIONS</i>			

**Non-Mandatory Appendix A to § 1910.900**  
**What You Need To Know About Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSDs)**

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Ergonomics is the science of fitting jobs to the people who work in them. The goal of an ergonomics program is to reduce work-related Musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) developed by workers when a major part of their jobs involve reaching, bending over, lifting heavy objects, using continuous force, working with vibrating equipment and doing repetitive motions.

**What are signs and symptoms of MSDs that you should watch out for?**

Workers suffering from MSDs may experience less strength for gripping, less range of motion, loss of muscle function and inability to do everyday tasks. Commons symptoms include:

*Painful joints*

*Pain, tingling or numbness in hands or feet*

*Shooting or stabbing pains in arms or legs*

*Swelling or inflammation*

*Burning Sensation*

*Pain in wrists, shoulders, forearms, knees*

*Fingers or toes turning white*

*Back or neck pain*

*Stiffness*

**What are MSDs?**

MSDs are injuries and illnesses that affect muscles, nerves, tendons, ligaments, joints or spinal discs. Your doctor might tell you that you have one of the following common MSDs.

*Carpal tunnel syndrome*

*Trigger finger*

*Tendonitis*

*Herniated spinal disc*

*Tension neck syndrome*

*Rotator cuff syndrome*

*Sciatica*

*Raynaud's phenomenon*

*Low back pain*

*DeQuervain's disease*

*Epicondylitis*

*Carpet layers' knee*

*Hand-arm Vibration Syndrome*

## If you have signs or symptoms of MSDs...

**If MSD signs and symptoms are not reported early, permanent disability may result. It is important that you report MSD signs and symptoms right away to avoid long-lasting problems. Your employer is required to respond promptly to those reports. Contact the following person to report MSDs, MSD signs or symptoms or MSD hazards:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone

**What causes MSDs?**

Workplace MSDs are caused by exposure to the following risk factors:

**Repetition:** Doing the same motions over and over again places stress on the muscles and tendons. The severity of risk depends on how often the action is repeated, the speed of the movement, the number of muscles involved and the required force.

**Forceful Exertions:** Force is the amount of physical effort required to perform a task (such as heavy lifting) or to maintain control of equipment or tools. The amount of force depends on the type of grip, the weight of an object, body posture, the type of activity and the duration of the task.

**Awkward Postures:** Posture is the position your body is in and affects muscle groups that are involved in physical activity. Awkward postures include repeated or prolonged reaching, twisting, bending, kneeling, squatting, working overhead with your hands or arms, or holding fixed positions.

**Contact Stress:** Pressing the body against a hard or sharp edge can result in placing too much pressure on nerves, tendons and blood vessels. For example, using the palm of your hand as a hammer can increase your risk of suffering an MSD.

**Vibration:** Operating vibrating tools such as sanders, grinders, chippers, routers, drills and other saws can lead to nerve damage.

## **What is the OSHA Ergonomics Standard?**

OSHA's standard requires employers to respond to employee reports of work-related MSDs or signs and symptoms of MSDs that last seven days after you report them. If your employer determines that your MSD, or MSD signs or symptoms, can be connected to your job, your employer must provide you with an opportunity to contact a health care professional and receive work restrictions, if necessary. Your wages and benefits must be protected for a period of time while on light duty or temporarily off work to recover. Your employer must analyze the job and if MSD hazards are found, must take steps to reduce those hazards.

**Your employer is required to make available a summary of the OSHA ergonomics standard. The full standard can be found at <http://www.osha.gov>.**

- **Talk to your supervisor or other responsible persons about your suggestions on how to fix the problem.**
- **Your employer may not discriminate against you for reporting MSDs, MSD signs or symptoms or MSD hazards. Your employer may not have policies that discourage such reporting.**



# Non-Mandatory Appendix B to § 1910.900

## Summary of the OSHA Ergonomics Program Standard

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### 1. *Why did OSHA issue an Ergonomics Program Standard?*

OSHA has issued an ergonomics standard to reduce musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) developed by workers whose jobs involve repetitive motions, force, awkward postures, contact stress and vibration. The principle behind ergonomics is that by fitting the job to the worker through adjusting a workstation, rotating between jobs or using mechanical assists, MSDs can be reduced and ultimately eliminated.

### 2. *Who is covered by the standard?*

All general industry employers are required to abide by the rule. The standard does not apply to employers whose primary operations are covered by OSHA's construction, maritime or agricultural standards, or employers who operate a railroad.

### 3. *What does the rule require employers to do?*

The rule requires employers to inform workers about common MSDs, MSD signs and symptoms and the importance of early reporting. When a worker reports signs or symptoms of an MSD the employer must determine whether the injury meets the definition of an MSD incident – a work-related MSD that requires medical treatment beyond first aid, assignment to a light duty job or temporary removal from work to recover, or work-related MSD signs or MSD symptoms that last for seven or more consecutive days.

If it is an MSD Incident, the employer must check the job, using a Basic Screening Tool to determine whether the job exposes the worker to risk factors that could trigger MSD problems. The rule provides a Basic Screening Tool that identifies risk factors that could lead to MSD hazards. If the risk factors on the job meet the levels of exposure in the Basic Screening Tool, then the job will have met the standard's Action Trigger.

### 4. *What happens when the worker's job meets the standard's Action Trigger?*

If the job meets the action Trigger, the employer must implement the following program elements:

A. **Management Leadership and Employee Participation:** The employer must set up an MSD reporting and response system and ergonomics program and provide supervisors with the responsibility and resources to run the program. The employer must also assure that policies encourage and do not discourage employee participation in the program, or the reporting of MSDs, MSD signs and symptoms, and MSD hazards.

Employees and their representatives must have ways to report MSDs, MSD signs and symptoms and MSD hazards

in the workplace, and receive prompt responses to those reports. Employees must also be given the opportunity to participate in the development, implementation, and evaluation of the ergonomics program.

B. **Job Hazard Analysis and Control:** If a job meets the Action Trigger, the employer must conduct a job hazard analysis to determine whether MSD hazards exist in the job. If hazards are found, the employer must implement control measures to reduce the hazards. Employees must be involved in the identification and control of hazards.

C. **Training:** The employer must provide training to employees in jobs that meet the Action Trigger, their supervisors or team leaders and other employees involved in setting up and managing your ergonomics program.

D. **MSD Management:** Employees must be provided, at no cost, with prompt access to a Health Care Professional (HCP), evaluation and follow-up of an MSD incident, and any temporary work restrictions that the employer or the HCP determine to be necessary. Temporary work restrictions include limitations on the work activities of the employee in his or her current job, transfer of the employee to a temporary alternative duty job, or temporary removal from work.

E. **Work Restriction Protection:** Employers must provide Work Restriction Protection (WRP) to employees who receive temporary work restrictions. This means maintaining 100% of earnings and full benefits for employees who receive limitations on the work activities in their current job or transfer to a temporary alternative duty job, and 90% of earnings and full benefits to employees who are removed from work. WRP is good for 90 days, or until the employee is able to safely return to the job, or until an HCP determines that the employee is too disabled to ever return to the job, whichever comes first.

F. **Second Opinion:** The standard also contains a process permitting the employee to use his or her own HCP as well as the employer's HCP to determine whether work restrictions are required. A third HCP may be chosen by the employee and the employer if the first two disagree.

G. **Program Evaluation:** The employer must evaluate the ergonomics program to make sure it is effective. The employer must ask employees what they think of it, check to see if hazards are being addressed, and make any necessary changes.

H. **Recordkeeping:** Employers with 11 or more employees, including part-time employees, must keep written or electronic records of employee reports of MSDs, MSD signs and symptoms and MSD hazards, responses to such reports, job hazard analyses, hazard control measures, ergonomics program evaluations, and records of work restrictions and the HCP's written opinions. Employees and their representatives must be provided access to these records.

I. **Dates:** Employers must begin to distribute information, and receive and respond to employee reports by October 15, 2001. Employers must implement permanent controls by November 14, 2004 or two years following determination that a job meets the Action Trigger, whichever comes later. Initial controls must be implemented within 90 days after the employer determines that the job meets the Action Trigger. Other obligations are triggered by the employer's determination that the job has met the Action Trigger.

### 5. *Flexibility features of the Ergonomics Program Standard:*

A. Employers whose workers have experienced a few isolated MSDs may be able to use the "Quick Fix" option to reduce hazards and avoid implementing many parts of the program.

B. Employers who already have ergonomics programs may be able to "grandfather" existing programs.

C. The employer may discontinue parts of the program under certain conditions.

The full OSHA Ergonomics Standard can be found at <http://www.osha.gov>.